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**BIGGLESWADE URBAN
DISTRICT**



ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year

1954

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND
SANITARY INSPECTOR

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1954

To the Members of the Biggleswade Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the health, vital statistics and sanitary conditions of the Biggleswade Urban District for the year 1954.

A review of the vital statistics shows that the adjusted death rate is considerably lower than that for 1953, being 12.6 as compared with 13.7. The infant mortality rate of 17.7 is much less than the rate of 25.5 for England and Wales. The chief causes of death still continue to be diseases of the heart and vascular system and cancer, the numbers being 49 and 20 respectively out of a total of 105 deaths.

The birth rate, after dropping to 11.7 in 1953, has risen to 14.6, somewhat below the figures of 15.2 for England and Wales.

The number of cases of infectious disease notified was 37 compared with 151 for 1953.

I wish to record my appreciation of the valued co-operation of the officers of the Council and their staffs.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

C. A. HARVEY,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	4,647
Registrar-General's estimate of Home Population ...	7,650
Number of inhabited houses end of 1954 ...	2,385
Rateable Value	£44,166
Sum represented by a penny rate	£172 16s. 9d.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR

Live Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	64	46	110
Illegitimate	3	—	3
	67	46	113

Crude birth rate per 1,000 Home population ... 14.8

Adjusted birth rate per 1,000 Home population 14.6

Birth rate for England and Wales 15.2

Still Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	3	3	6
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	3	3	6

Still Birth rate per 1,000 Total Births 50.4

Still Birth rate for England and Wales 40.0

Deaths

	Males	Females	Total
All Causes	55	50	105
Crude death rate per 1,000 Home population ...			13.7
Adjusted death rate per 1,000 Home population			12.6
Death rate for England and Wales			11.3
Deaths from diseases and accidents of pregnancy and child birth :			
From Sepsis	...	...	—
From other causes	...	...	—

Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	—	1	1
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	1	1	2

Rate of all infants per 1,000 live births 17.7

Rate for England and Wales 25.5

Vital Statistics for the year—continued.

Deaths from :—

Measles (all ages) ...	...	...	...	...	—
Whooping Cough ...	...	...	...	...	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ...	...	...	...	...	—
Influenza ...	...	...	...	...	1
Cancer (all ages) ...	...	...	...	...	23

STATISTICAL TABLE 1944-1953

Year	DEATH RATE		BIRTH RATE		INFANT MORTALITY RATE	
	Biggleswade Urban	England & Wales	Biggleswade Urban	England & Wales	Biggleswade Urban	England & Wales
1944	11.2	11.6	21.6	17.6	46.6	46
1945	11.5	11.4	15.9	16.1	70.7	46
1946	10.7	11.5	15.8	19.1	27.2	43
1947	11.4	12.0	20.9	20.5	56.0	41
1948	10.5	10.8	16.7	17.9	40.6	34
1949	10.5	11.7	16.8	16.7	16.1	32
1950	9.4	11.6	18.3	15.8	15.3	29.8
1951	11.4	12.5	16.4	15.5	16.8	29.6
1952	11.9	11.3	15.4	15.3	35.1	27.6
1953	13.7	11.4	11.7	15.5	11.5	26.8
1954	12.6	11.3	14.6	15.2	17.7	25.5

CAUSES OF DEATH

The following table shows causes of death as given in the Registrar-General's statistics :

Causes of Death							M.	F.
All Causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	55	50
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
2. Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
4. Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
6. Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
7. Acute poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
8. Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	2
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung bronchus	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	1
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	3
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	4
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
16. Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	9
18. Coronary disease, angina	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	5
19. Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
20. Other heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	11
21. Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
22. Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
23. Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	—
24. Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	—
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
31. Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	9
33. Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
34. All other accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
35. Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
36. Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

Public Health Officers

Medical Officer of Health—

C. A. HARVEY, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector, Engineer and Surveyor—

T. WILSON, M.Inst.M.E., M.R.S.I.

Laboratory Facilities

The services of the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, is available for the examination of any material submitted by the Health Department or by General Practitioners. This service is under the direction of the Medical Research Council through the Ministry of Health, and there is no charge to the Council. The Laboratory undertakes the examination of throat swabs, sputum, urine and fæces, and blood from all cases of suspected infectious disease, and advice and assistance is always available.

Ambulance Facilities

The Bedfordshire County Council provides a complete service covering the whole of the County. The service is a twenty-four hour one and is free of charge, and is available for the removal of all cases requiring admission to hospital and also for the transport of patients who are unable to use other means of transport to and from Hospitals or Clinics, so that they can receive any necessary treatment. The request for the provision of an ambulance must be made by a General Practitioner or by an Authorised Person.

The service is also available for the transport of persons suffering from infectious disease to isolation hospital.

The following depots are situated in the eastern and northern districts of the County :—

Biggleswade : Crab Lane.

Tel. : Biggleswade 2295.

Bedford : Bedford Road, Kempston. Tel. : Bedford 5335 & 5336.

Midwifery and Domiciliary Nursing Services

The County Council are the responsible Authority for these services. One midwife is available for Maternity cases and one Nurse for Minor Medical and Surgical Cases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

Maternity and Child Welfare :

Child Welfare—"The Lawns," Biggleswade, Tuesday afternoons.

Ante and Post Natal—"The Lawns," Biggleswade, alternate Tuesday mornings.

Venereal Diseases

Bedford General Hospital, South Wing. The days and times of attendance are :—

Males and Females — Wednesday, 5—7 p.m.

Friday, 3—5 p.m.

Tuberculosis

The Chest Clinic, Bedford General Hospital, North Wing, Kimbolton Road, Bedford. The days and times of attendance are :

Monday ...	2 p.m. to 7 p.m.	Refills (A.P. and P.P.)
Tuesday ...	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.	{ Women and children—new and old patients
	2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.	
Wednesday	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Contacts
	2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.	Old patients—male and female
Thursday	9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.	Males—old and new patients
Friday ...	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Refills (A.P. and P.P.)
	2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.	Special cases.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply

Water is supplied to the area by the Biggleswade Water Board and has proved very satisfactory in quality and quantity. Samples have been taken periodically during the year and the results have shown that the supply is of the highest standard of organic and bacterial purity.

The following report by the Counties Public Health Laboratories of a sample sent for examination on 16th June, 1954, is typical :

Chemical Examination in parts per Million

Appearance—Clear and bright.

Colour	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Odour	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Turbidity	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

Reaction pH.	...	...	...	...	...	7.1
Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	...	...	...	28
Electric Conductivity	...	...	...	...	...	540
Total Solids dried at 180 deg. C.	...	...	...	...	...	360
Chlorine present as Chloride	...	...	...	...	...	19
Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate	...	...	...	...	...	240
Hardness : Total	...	...	...	...	...	310
Carbonate	...	...	...	...	...	240
Non-Carbonate	...	...	...	...	...	70
Nitrate Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	...	0.00
Nitrite Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	...	Absent
Ammoniacal Nitrogen*	...	...	...	...	...	0.008
Albuminoid Nitrogen*	...	...	...	...	...	0.000
Metals	...	...	...	...	...	Absent
Free Chlorine Reaction	...	...	...	...	...	—
Oxygen absorbed	...	...	...	...	...	0.10
Residual Chlorine	...	...	...	...	...	Absent

* To convert to Ammonia multiply by 1.21

Bacteriological Results

Number of Colonies developing on Agar—

1 day at 37 degs. C.	...	...	...	...	0 per ml.
2 days at 37 degs. C.	...	...	...	...	0 per ml.
3 days at 20 degs. C.	...	...	...	...	3 per ml.
		Present in	Absent from	Probable Number	
Presumptive Coliform reaction	...	— ml.	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.	
Bact. coli. (Type 1)	...	— ml.	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.	
Cl. welchii reaction	...	— ml.	100 ml.		

This is a very satisfactory sample. It is clear and bright in appearance and of the highest standard of bacterial purity, indicative of a wholesome water suitable for public supply purposes.

Drainage and Sewage

With the exception of a few cottages on the Langford Road and some outlying cottages, the whole of the area has a water carriage system. The sewage disposal plant has been working to capacity. The length of new sewers laid during the year is given in the Sanitary Inspector's report. The cesspools of the outlying unsewered properties are emptied by arrangement.

RAINFALL — 1954

MONTH	TOTAL Inches	GREATEST RAINFALL IN 24 HOURS		No. OF DAYS WITH		DAYS NO RAIN
		Inches	Dates	Slight trace	.01 or over	
January ...	0.65	0.30	13th	3	4	20
February ...	1.66	0.38	8th	2	10	10
March ...	2.02	0.44	30th	1	1	18
April ...	0.24	0.10	1st	1	3	24
May ...	2.48	0.87	28th	2	3	15
June ...	3.26	1.46	12th	1	5	15
July ...	2.39	0.65	25th	1	4	14
August ...	3.79	0.92	9th	Nil	3	13
September ...	1.59	0.32	23rd	1	8	12
October ...	1.54	0.28	31st	2	6	13
November ...	3.50	0.55	6th	2	3	11
December ...	1.72	1.00	8th	1	7	19
Total ...	24.84					184

INFECTIOUS DISEASES, OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS

(a) General Statistics

The following table shows the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of cases admitted to hospital and the deaths from these diseases.

Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) notified during the year 1954.

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total registered deaths
Scarlet Fever	5	—	—
Pneumonia	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—
Measles	1	—	—
Whooping Cough	31	—	—
Jaundice	—	—	—
Total	37	—	—

(b) Individual Diseases

Scarlet Fever—Five cases were notified.

Diphtheria—No cases were notified.

Measles—Only one case notified as compared with 121 in the previous year.

Whooping Cough—Thirty-one cases were notified.

Pneumonia—No cases were notified.

Erysipelas—No cases were notified.

Jaundice—No cases were notified.

Analysis of Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year ended 31st December, 1954

	Under 1 year	1 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards	Total all ages
	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	
Scarlet Fever ...	—	3	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Whooping Cough	—	4	3	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	31
Pneumonia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Jaundice ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

CLEANSING OF VERMINOUS PERSONS

Public Health Act, 1936, Sec. 85

Scabies

By arrangement with the Borough of Bedford, infected persons and contacts are treated at the Treatment Centre, Bedford.

Prevention of Blindness

No action was necessary under Section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

School Closure

It was not found necessary to close any schools in the area on account of infectious disease.

Eradication of Bed Bugs

It was not found necessary to disinfect any houses during the year.

Thermatox disinfectors and Bombay liquid spray is available for use when required.

I. IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

The table given below shows the number of children under 15 years of age who have received protective treatment against Diphtheria. The County Council, under the National Health Service Act, 1946, provides this treatment free of charge through the family doctor or at school or a child Welfare Centre. The figures have been supplied by the Eastern Divisional Medical Officer. It is still necessary to urge all parents to give their children the protection which can be had free of cost from their own doctor or at a Welfare Clinic or at School.

Since the introduction of immunisation throughout the country, there has been a remarkable decline in the number of cases and deaths from Diphtheria, and in many of the smaller areas, no cases have occurred for several years, with the result that the seriousness of the disease tends to be forgotten. Should the percentage of children protected against the disease decline, there is a danger that diphtheria may once more take its toll of child life.

Primary Immunisations completed during 1954

Number of children during the year 1954 who completed a full course of Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including Temporary Residents)

Age at 31.12.54 i.e. Born in year	Under 1 1954	1 1953	2 1952	3 1951	4 1950	5 to 9 1945-1949	10 to 14 1944-1940	Total under 15
Number Immunised	47	12	2	—	—	18	—	79

II—Diphtheria Notifications and Deaths in relation to Immunisation

Age at date of notification	Number of cases notified	No. of cases included in preceding column in which child had completed full course of immunisation	Age at date of death	Number of deaths	No. of cases included in preceding column in which child had completed full course of immunisation
Under 1	—	—	Under 1	—	—
1	—	—	1	—	—
2	—	—	2	—	—
3	—	—	3	—	—
4	—	—	4	—	—
5 to 9	—	—	5 to 9	—	—
10 to 14	—	—	10 to 14	—	—
Totals	—	—	Totals	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS

The following table shows the number of new cases, and the number of deaths in their age groups.

Age Distribution of Cases and Deaths

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
45	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	2	1	—	—	1	1	—	—

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925

No action was taken under these regulations, or under section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

REPORT OF SURVEYOR AND SANITARY INSPECTOR

Year Ended 31st December, 1954

Building Plans

The following building plans were approved by the Council and work inspected and drains tested during course of construction :—

Dwellings	...	...	...	...	6
Alterations, additions, conversions	...				41
Garages	...	...	...	...	16
Caravans	...	...	...	...	3
Accesses	...	...	...	...	3
Workshops	...	...	...	...	—
Factories	...	...	...	...	—
Petrol Tanks	...	...	...	...	2
Sports Pavilion	...	...	...	...	—
Change of use	...	...	...	...	—
Advertisement signs	...	...	...	...	3
Greenhouses, agricultural buildings, store sheds, etc.	...	...	...	...	7
					81

General Sanitary Inspections

The following inspections were made and nuisances abated or defects remedied where necessary by informal action :—

Housing defects	...	...	...	...	1792
Unfit houses	...	...	...	...	17
Defective drains	...	...	...	...	29
Factories	...	...	...	...	5
Water wastage	...	...	...	...	694
					2537

Twenty-six inspections were made in connection with Rodent Control, treatment being necessary in 13 cases, and one test baiting of sewers was carried out.

Meat and other Foods

The following foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption :—

Meat	...	...	...	...	214 lbs.
Offal	...	...	...	...	2956 lbs.
Canned meat	...	...	...	...	155 lbs.
Cheese	...	...	...	...	88 lbs.
Various tinned foods	...	...	...	...	381 tins.

In consequence of the decontrol of meat, private slaughtering recommenced on 2nd July, 1954, and three slaughterhouses in the district were granted a licence. Since that date regular meat inspection duties at these slaughterhouses have been carried out by the Council's staff, and the following animals were slaughtered and inspected :—

Bulls	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cows	...	...	...	...	...	2
Steers	...	...	...	...	...	87
Heifers	...	...	...	...	...	93
Pigs	...	...	...	...	...	219
Sheep	...	...	...	...	...	365

Factories and Workshops

The following factories and workshops are registered :—

Brewers	...	...	...	...	...	1
Millers	...	...	...	...	...	3
Motor and Cycle Engineers	...	...	...	...	...	12
General Engineers	...	...	...	...	...	4
Joiners	...	...	...	...	...	4
Plumbers	...	...	...	...	...	4
Printers	...	...	...	...	...	2
Tailors	...	...	...	...	...	2
Boot Repairers	...	...	...	...	...	5
Laundry	...	...	...	...	...	1
Caravans	...	...	...	...	...	1
Lingerie Manufacture	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bookbinding	...	...	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	16

House Scavenging

A new 18 cubic yard Dennis "Paxit" refuse collecting vehicle was acquired and put into service in March of this year. This normally deals with all collections but the existing 10 cubic yard Karrier vehicle has been retained and is used to give assistance from

time to time as may be required. The refuse is disposed of by means of controlled tipping.

The salvage of scrap metal and rags has been continued and is undertaken during the course of normal refuse collection. Waste paper is not collected in view of reduced demands and difficulty of disposal.

Sewerage

No new sewers were laid during the year. Combined drains and connections were constructed for 56 non-traditional type houses at The Race Housing Estate. Ten new connections were made to existing sewers.

Water Supply

A length of 224 yards of new 6in. C.I. water main was laid during the year for the purpose of improving the supply to an existing factory. Seventy-seven new connections to the Council's mains were made.

The total consumption of water for the year inclusive of trade supplies was 122,762,000 gallons. This shows a decrease of approximately 3,000,000 gallons on the figures for the previous year. The overall daily average consumption of water was approximately 44 gallons per head of the population.

Six hundred and ninety-four inspections for water wastages were made. Thirteen notices were served requiring repairs to prevent waste, and 640 taps were rewashed free of charge.

Housing

Construction work on three housing sites has been continued during the year. A further 18 traditional type houses were commenced and 50 houses were completed and occupied.

A further 56 non-traditional type houses (Unity) were also commenced and 47 completed and occupied. Sixty-two hutments were demolished and sites cleared prior to the construction of the Unity type houses.

T. WILSON, M.I.Mun.E., M.R.S.I.,
Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

PART I

1.—Inspections :

Premises	Number on Register	Number of Inspections	Number of Written notices	Number of Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	11	3	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	47	11	1	—
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	58	14	1	—

2.—Cases in which defects were found :

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation ...	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences:					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	1	—	—	—

PART VIII

Outwork

Nature of Work	Section 110		Section 111			
	No. of outworkers in August list required by Section 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing apparel (making)	1	—	—	—	—	—

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